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MILITARY ADDRESSEE HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE WASHDC INFO AMMAN, KUWAIT,
LONDON, SANAA, TEHRAN APRIL 16, 1973 FROM JIDDA IS REPEATED
TO YOU: QUOTE

SE C R E T JIDDA 1539

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TAGS: PFOR, MCAP, MASS, SA, YE, IZ

SUBJECT: YAR REQUEST FOR URGENT US MILITARY ASSISTANCE:

PENINSULA DEFENSE DISCUSSED WITH PRINCE FAHD

REF: A. STATE 66153; B. STATE 66350

SUMMARY: PRINCE FAHD WELL PLEASED WITH US PROPOSALS
FOR ASSISTING YEMEN MILITARILY AS DESCRIBED BY AMBASSADOR.
FAHD REVIEWED CHARACTER OF THREAT FROM PDRY AND IRAQ , THOUGHT
CLASH BETWEEN SAG AND PDRY INEVITABLE. AMB URGED REGIONAL
ACTION FOR STRENGTHENING PENINSULA SECURITY WITH US REMAINING
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BEHIND SCENES GIVING SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT. IT IMPORTANT THAT AGGRESSOR ROLE, IF THERE IS TO BE ONE, SHOULD BE LEFT TO PDRY TO AVOID GIVING IRAQ ANY EXCUSE TO INTERVENE. FAHD'S REMARKS AND OTHER AVAILABLE EVIDENCE INDICATE SAUDI POLICY AT MOMENT IS TO PREPARE MAKE GOOD SHOWING IN SOUTH IF COMPLEELED TO, WHILE CONTINUING POLICY OF LYING LOW ALONG IRAQI BORDER. END SUMMARY.

1. FOLLOWING MY MEETING EARLIER IN DAY WITH PRINCE SULTAN, CALLED ON PRINCE FHAD APRIL 14 AND DESCRIBED TO HIM IN SUMMARY FASHION COURSES OF ACTION WE PROPOSED TO HELP STRENGTHEN YAR MILITARILY AS DESCRIBED REFTEL A. SAID I HAD BEEN THROUGH THESE PROPOSALS IN CONSIDERABLE DETAIL WITH PRINCE SULTAN AND FOUND HIM ENTHUSIASTIC. WE MOST ANXIOUS THERE SHOULD BE PROMPT ACTION TO DELIVER SOME ITEMS AT ONCE TO YEMENIS. TOLD FAHD ALSO OF OUR SUMMARY OF OUTLOOK FOR PDRY AND IRAQ, AND THAT HE MIGHT WISH RECEIVE COPY FROM FONMINISTRY (REFTEL B).

2. FAHD EXPRESSED GREAT SATISFACTION AND LAUNCHED INTO HIS CONCEPT OF NATURE OF RADICAL TREAT TO PENINSULA ON LINES WITH WHICH WE FAIRLY FAMILIAR. HE STRESSED THAT ALL OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES, WITH EXCEPTION IRAQ, WOULD LOOK FAVORABLY ON SAG MILITARY HELP TO YAR, INCLUDING EVEN LIBYA. SOVIETS AND COMMUNIST CHIESE EVALUATE THEIR SUPPORT FOR SOUTH YEMEN AS BEING EVEN MORE EFFECTIVELY DISRUPTIVE THAN AID TO EGYPT. DEVELOPMENT OF SAUDI STRENGTH IS MOST EFFECTIVE POSSIBLE DETERRENT. FAHD CLAIMED " WE HAVE NEWS" OF PROBABLE FURTHER PDRY ATTACK AGAINST WUDIA AND SHARURA. IN THIS SOUTH YEMEN IS SIMPLY FOLLOWING DICTATES OF SOVIETS AND CHINESE. CLASH BETWEEN SAG AND PDRY THUS SEEMS INEVITABLE. SAUDIS WELL AWARE THAT IRAQ MIGHT CREATE TROUBLE ALSO IF PDRY WERE TO ATTACK. FAHD WAS PLEASED TO HEAR THAT WE HAD ALREADY RESPONDED AFFIRMATIVELY TO SAG REQUEST FOR EXPEDITING DELIVERY OF F-5 AMMUNITION. " IF WE ARE WEAK." HE COMMENTED, " OUR OWN PEOPLE WILL TURN AGAINST US." SAUDI ARABIA IS DELIGHTED WITH THIS NEW EVIDENCE OF US INTEREST IN SUPPORTING ITS INDEPENDENCE AND KNOWS THAT IN CASE OF NEED US WILL ALWAYS " STAND BY OUR SIDE." AND THAT SAUDI ARABIA COULD COUNT ON US.

3. AS I HAD WITH SULTAN, I FOUND OCCASION REPEAT DESCRIPTION OUR PHILOSOPHY WITH REGARD PENINSULA SECURITY.

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IT MOST IMPORTANT COUNTRIES OF ENTIRE REGION WORK

TOGETHER FOR THIS PURPOSE. US WOULD REMAIN BEHIND SCENES AND GIVE SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT. SAUDI ARABIA HAD IMPORTANT TASK TO PERFORM IN STRENGTHENING ITS OWN OUTER DEFENSES, I. E., JORDAN, YAR AND OMAN. MEANWHILE, THOUGH I WAS NO MILITARY TACTICIAN, IT SEEMED IMPORTANT SAUDI ARABIA PLAY THIS ROLE IN MANNER WHICH WOULD ALWAYS ASSURE THAT SOUTH YEMEN, IF IT FELT IT MUST, WOULD BE CAST AS AGGRESSOR. CERTAINLY, SAUDI ARABIA WOULD WISH AVOID GIVING IRAQ ANY EXCUSE TO INTERVENE. FAHD AGREED BUT DECLARED DIFFICULTY IS OF COURSE, IRAQI RULERS DO NOT REALLY WISH STABILITY.

4. COMMENT: FAHD ALSO MADE PASSING REFERENCE TO " NEAR CLASH" BETWEEN SPVHC SIV FRL WRAQI FORCES RECENTLY ALONG BORDER. THIS WOULD BE SIMPLY MOVEMENT OF ELEMENTS FORWARD WITH SUBSEQUENT WITHDRAWAL MENTIONED TO ME BY TURKI AND PHARAON (JIDDA 1065 AND 1223), BUT I DID NOT PRESS FAHD FOR DETAILS BECAUSE OF SAUDI INCLINATION AS REFLECTED BOTH BY FAHD AND DEPUTY DEFMINISTER PRINCE TURKI TO AFFIRM VIGOROUSLY SAUDI EXPECTATIONS WITH REGARD USG ACTION WHEN SUBJECT OF POSSIBLE IRAQI MOVES COMES UP. IT CLEAR SAUDIS HAVE MUCH IN THEIR MINDS POSSIBILITY OF AGGRESIVE ENDEAVORS COORDINATED BETWEEN IRAQ AND PDRY. OUR SUMMARY APPRAISAL AT MOMENT IS THAT SAG, IF IT DOES NOT BECOME TOO EAGER, COULD GIVE REASONABLY GOOD ACCOUNT OF ITSELF IN ANY KIND OF DUSTUP ALONG SAUDI- PDRY BORDER. (INJECTED CAUTIONARY TONE IN MY REMARKS TO FAHD IN VIEW OF GEN SMITH' S HAVING REPORTED TO ME HAWKISH BOASTING AMONG SOME YOUNGER SAUDI OFFICERS, AND WE KNOW SULTAN HIMSELF OCCASIONALLY DISPLAYS SUCH SYMPTOMS, THOUGH KING WOULD CERTAINLY BE RESTRAINING INFLUENCE.)

5. WITHIN IAST WEEK SAUDIS WITHDREW MOST OF SOME TWENTY LIGHTINGS THEY HAD BEEN MAINTAINING AT KHAMIS MUSHAYT IN ORDER CONDUCT FIRING PRACTICE IN VICINITY OF IRYADH. NOW, HOWEVER, WE INFORMED AIRCRAFT HAVE BEEN RETURNED TO SOUTH WHERE, ACCORDING TO REPORTS, RSAF DOING PASSABLE JOB MAINTAINING OPERATIONAL READINESS WITH ASSISTANCE RELATIVELY FEW BRITISH TECHNICIANS. AS FAR AS WE CAN DETERMINE, HOEVER, SAUDIS CONTINUE MAN IRAQI BORDER ONLY WITH ELEMENTS OF NATIONAL GUARD, FOLLOWING POLICY, WE SPECULATE, OF (A) AVOIDING ANY APPEAANCE PROVOKING IRAQIS. (B) CONCENTRATING STRONGER MILITARY FORCES IN AREA (SOUTH) WHERE THEY BELIEVE THEY CAN DO MOST GOOD IF REQUIRED. KING, WE KNOW TOO, HARBORS DEEP ANXIETY REGARDING IRAQI INTENTIONS, SECRET

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BUT JUDGE HE WOULD THINK CAREFULLY FIRST ABOUT POSSIBILITIES OF AID FROM SYRIAN, JORDAN OR EGYPT BEFORE CALLING FOR US HELP IN MANNER THAT WOULD REVEAL USG CLEARLY AS SAUDI ARABIA' S PRINCIPAL ALLY. THACHE UNQUOTE ROGERS

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